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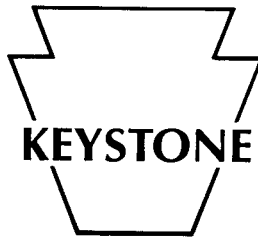
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Ag Digest

Note to Survey Respondents: Results of many surveys we conduct throughout the year are included in this report! Most survey results are not published individually. **Thank you** for taking the time to complete our surveys!

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The Keystone Ag Digest may be found on the Internet at the following address:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Pennsylvania/Publications/Keystone_Ag_Digest/index.asp

FARM EMPLOYMENT, HOURS WORKED & WAGE RATES, WEEK OF April 9-15, 2006 ¹

Item	NE II ²	U. S. ³
	<i>Thousands</i>	
Farm Employment		
Hired Workers.....	25	718
Expected to be Employed.....		
150 Days or More.....	20	580
149 Days or Less.....	5	138
	<i>Hours</i>	
Hours Worked		
Hired.....	40.2	40.8
	<i>Dollars per Hour</i>	
Wage Rates for		
All Hired Workers.....	10.75	9.79
Type of Worker		
Field & Livestock Combined.....	10.10	9.07
Field.....	10.54	8.96
Livestock.....	8.80	9.30

¹ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers. ² NORTHEAST II includes Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey and Delaware. ³ Excludes AK.

HIRED WORKERS DOWN 4 PERCENT, WAGE RATES UP 5 PERCENT FROM A YEAR AGO

There were 956,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 9-15, 2006, down 4 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 718,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 238,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.79 per hour during the April 2006 reference week, up 44 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.96 per hour, up 40 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$9.30 per hour compared with \$9.14 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.07 per hour, was up 35 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 40.8 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 2 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in California and in the Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina) and Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia) regions. In California, eight consecutive weeks of rain and unseasonably cool weather caused major delays in fieldwork across the northern two-thirds of the State. These factors, along with the ongoing worker shortages due to the continued tight security at the Mexican border and the controversy over immigration, have combined to keep the number of hired workers much lower than last year. Persistent dryness over the Southeast region has kept soil moisture levels inadequate for field preparation and planting, reducing the need for field workers. Pasture growth in the region has been severely curtailed by the lack of rain, delaying movement of cattle to grazing and decreasing the demand for livestock workers. In the Appalachian II region, late thunderstorms just prior to the reference week left soils too wet to work and caused delays in field activity. Therefore, fewer hired workers were needed.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), and Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio) regions, and in Florida. In the Delta region, a return to more normal weather patterns compared to last year's cool, wet reference week caused hired worker numbers to be higher. Continued dry conditions in the Appalachian I region kept pastures from greening up, necessitating more supplemental feeding and heightening the demand for livestock workers. In the Corn Belt I region, cold, damp weather just prior to the reference week had put many field activities on hold. Considerably warmer, drier conditions during the reference week allowed fieldwork to gain momentum, increasing the need for hired workers. Strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industries in Florida caused more field workers to be required.

PRICES RECEIVED BY FARMERS, SELECTED COMMODITIES, MAY 2006

Commodity	Unit	Pennsylvania			United States		
		May 2005	Apr 2006	May 2006 ¹	May 2005	Apr 2006	May 2006 ¹
<i>Dollars</i>							
Corn	Bu.	2.54	2.51	2.55	1.98	2.11	2.17
Wheat, Winter ²	Bu.	-	-	-	3.23	3.76	4.10
Oats	Bu.	1.96	2.18	2.09	1.64	1.75	1.76
Barley ²	Bu.	-	-	-	2.46	2.67	2.70
Soybeans ²	Bu.	-	-	-	6.21	5.52	5.62
Hay, Dry All	Ton	128.00	138.00	154.00	107.00	106.00	114.00
Dry Alfalfa	Ton	141.00	177.00	178.00	116.00	110.00	118.00
Dry Other.....	Ton	110.00	131.00	140.00	75.40	93.20	96.80
Apples, Fresh Use.....	Lb.	.171	.230	.210	.174	.247	.238
Potatoes	Cwt.	⁶	⁶	⁶	6.23	7.97	8.29
Cows, Slaughter	Cwt.	57.90	50.10	49.80	58.30	48.50	48.00
Steers & Heifers	Cwt.	89.90	81.20	79.90	96.10	89.30	85.80
Calves	Cwt.	140.00	138.00	139.00	143.00	135.00	132.00
Barrows & Gilts.....	Cwt.	53.00	39.80	45.40	55.50	41.80	47.90
Sows	Cwt.	41.10	28.30	28.70	42.60	28.80	29.40
Eggs ³	Doz.	.240	.300	.200	.243	.318	.231
Milk, Fluid Grade	Cwt.	16.50	13.80	-	14.70	12.20	12.00
Manufactured Grade.....	Cwt.	13.60	10.80	-	14.00	11.30	11.20
All.....	Cwt.	16.50	13.80	13.40	14.70	12.10	12.00
Milk Cows ⁴	Head	-	1,800.00	-	-	1,770.00	-

¹ Preliminary. ² Pennsylvania price not published on monthly basis, average price is published annually. ³ Market (table) eggs, including eggs sold retail by the producer. ⁴ Quarterly (Feb., Apr., July, Oct.). ⁵ Price not published to avoid disclosure of individual firms. ⁶ Monthly price for potatoes discontinued in 2005.

MAY FARM PRICES RECEIVED INDEX **INCREASED 1 POINT FROM LAST MONTH**

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in May, at 114, based on 1990-92=100, increased 1 point (0.9 percent) from April. The Crop Index is up 3 points (2.4 percent) but the Livestock Index decreased 1 point (1.0 percent). Producers received higher prices for lettuce, hogs, onions, and grapefruit. Lower prices were received for cattle, asparagus, tomatoes, and eggs. The overall index is also affected by the seasonal change based on a 3-year average mix of commodities producers sell. Increased average marketings of grapes, sweet corn, cantaloup, and broilers offset decreased marketings of cattle, milk, calves, and apples. Preliminary All Farm Products Index is down 5 points (4.2 percent) from May 2005. The Food Commodities Index, at 115, increased 1 point (0.9 percent) from last month but decreased 7 points (5.7 percent) from May 2005.

Feed Grains & Hay: The May index is 107, up 4.9 percent from last month and 8.1 percent above a year ago. The corn price, at \$2.17 per bushel, is up 6 cents from last month and 19 cents above May 2005. The all hay price, at \$114.00 per ton, is up \$8.00 from April and \$7.00 from last May.

Livestock & Products: The May index, at 104, is 1.0 percent below last month and down 14 percent from May 2005. Compared with a year ago, prices are lower for milk, cattle, broilers, hogs, calves, and eggs but higher for turkeys.

Dairy Products: The May index, at 92, is down 1.1 percent from a month ago and 19 percent lower than May last year. The May all milk price of \$12.00 per cwt is down 10 cents from last month and \$2.70 from May 2005. The fluid grade milk price is down 20 cents and the manufacturing grade milk price decreased 10 cents from the previous month.

U.S. PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS ¹

Commodity	Unit	May 2005	Apr 2006	May 2006
<i>Dollars</i>				
Wheat.....	Bu.	10.10	10.50	10.40
Corn	Bu.	6.78	7.78	7.76
All Milk, Sold to Plants ²	Cwt.	35.20	38.50	38.40
Wool.....	Lb.	1.57	1.62	1.62
Barley.....	Bu.	6.72	7.27	7.25
Oats	Bu.	3.95	4.32	4.31
Potatoes	Cwt.	15.30	16.10	16.00
Rye	Bu.	6.31	6.94	6.92
Soybeans	Bu.	15.90	17.20	17.20
Apples, For Fresh Use ³ ...	Lb.	.529	.528	.527
Beef Cattle	Cwt.	179.00	193.00	192.00
Calves	Cwt.	243.00	268.00	267.00
Hogs.....	Cwt.	111.00	117.00	117.00
Lambs	Cwt.	217.00	233.00	232.00
Sheep.....	Cwt.	87.70	95.60	95.40
Eggs.....	Doz.	1.75	1.78	1.77
Turkeys, Live.....	Lb.	1.050	1.090	1.090

¹ Parity prices are computed under the provisions of Title III, Subtitle a, Section 301 (a) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 as amended by the Agricultural Acts of 1948, 1949, and 1956. ² Seasonally adjusted price as percentage of parity price. ³ Equivalent packinghouse-door returns for CA, NY (apples only). Price at point of first sale for other states.

COLD STORAGE HIGHLIGHTS
APRIL 30, 2006

Apples in cold storage reported by cold storage warehouses for Pennsylvania totaled 2,370,000 bushels on April 30, 2006, compared to 1,791,000 bushels on April 30, 2005. The three varieties with the largest fresh market and processing reported stocks in bushels were: York with 1,029,000; Golden Delicious 523,000 bushels, and Rome with 430,000 bushels.

Total apple stocks in Pennsylvania totaled 99,540,000 pounds on April 30, 2006, compared to 75,222,000 pounds on April 30, 2005. There were no pear stocks reported in cold storage on April 30, 2006.

Nationally, frozen food stocks in refrigerated warehouses on April 30, 2006 were greater than year earlier levels for beef, eggs, chicken, butter, and cheese. Butter stocks were up 16 percent from last month and up 20 percent from a year ago. Total red meat supplies in freezers were up 2 percent from last month and up 6 percent from last year. Frozen pork supplies were up 3 percent from last month, but down 8 percent from the previous year. Stocks of pork bellies were down 1 percent from last month and down 25 percent from last year.

Total frozen poultry supplies on April 30, 2006 were up 2 percent from the previous month and up 13 percent from a year ago. Total stocks of

chicken were down 3 percent from the previous month, but up 22 percent from last year. Total pounds of turkey in freezers were up 13 percent from last month, but down 2 percent from April 30, 2005.

STOCKS IN COLD STORAGE, UNITED STATES

Commodity	Apr 30, 2005	Mar 31, 2006	Apr 30, 2006
	<i>(000) Lbs.</i>		
Butter.....	164,501	170,257	197,439
Cheese, Total Natural	780,809	799,156	814,873
Eggs, Frozen	18,903	20,757	23,291
Poultry, Total Frozen.....	1,133,474	1,258,017	1,279,256
Chicken.....	692,153	869,654	841,131
Turkeys	440,122	380,440	430,123
Fruits, Frozen.....	708,061	747,015	720,837
Fruit Juices, Frozen.....	1,965,968	1,319,484	1,401,877
Vegetables, Total Frozen	1,603,483	1,711,322	1,564,060
Potatoes, Total Frozen.....	1,174,326	1,158,998	1,177,055
Meats, Total Frozen	909,513	946,009	963,614
Beef, Total Frozen.....	329,425	423,963	429,006
Pork, Total Frozen.....	563,803	502,588	516,260

PENNSYLVANIA APPLES IN COLD STORAGE, APRIL 2006

Variety	April 30, 2005					April 30, 2006				
	Fresh Market ¹		Processing		Total	Fresh Market ¹		Processing		Total
	Reg.	C.A.	Reg.	C.A.		Reg.	C.A.	Reg.	C.A.	
	(1,000) Bushels									
York.....	0	0	48	489	537	1	1	401	626	1,029
Stayman	4	2	11	1	18	0	3	1	0	4
Rome.....	2	33	175	300	510	0	30	151	249	430
Red Delicious	5	115	22	56	198	2	128	23	28	181
Golden Delicious ..	2	58	118	133	311	3	151	251	118	523
Gala.....	0	2	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	3
McIntosh.....	1	4	0	11	16	0	2	0	0	2
Fuji	12	20	6	0	38	7	39	0	0	46
Other ²	7	31	55	68	161	4	22	41	85	152
Total.....	33	265	435	1,058	1,791	17	379	868	1,106	2,370

¹ Includes total quantities on hand; graded and ungraded, packed or loose on the last day of the month specified. ² Includes miscellaneous varieties and some quantities of above varieties not identified. n/p (not published) due to too few reports or insignificant volumes stored, these are included in the 'other' variety category.

APPLE & PEAR STOCKS IN COLD STORAGE, PENNSYLVANIA & UNITED STATES, APRIL 30, 2006

Commodity	All Warehouse Stocks		
	April 30, 2005	March 31, 2006	April 30, 2006
PENNSYLVANIA			
APPLES:			
Regular Storage	19,656,000	57,456,000	37,170,000
Controlled Atmosphere	55,566,000	75,978,000	62,370,000
Total Apples.....	75,222,000	133,434,000	99,540,000
PEARS:			
Bartletts	0	0	0
Other Varieties.....	0	0	0
Total Pears	0	0	0
UNITED STATES			
APPLES:			
Regular Storage	93,610,000	177,513,000	107,210,000
Controlled Atmosphere	1,957,788,000	2,204,905,000	1,638,330,000
Total Apples.....	2,051,398,000	2,382,418,000	1,745,540,000
PEARS:			
Bartletts	226,000	1,120,000	997,000
Other Varieties.....	62,043,000	131,062,000	91,889,000
Total Pears	62,269,000	132,182,000	92,886,000

MONTHLY POULTRY SUMMARY

Item	Unit	Pennsylvania			United States		
		Apr 2005	Mar 2006	Apr 2006	Apr 2005	Mar 2006	Apr 2006
Layers.....	Thous.	23,943	23,818	23,947	343,574	350,088	348,454
Eggs Per 100 Layers.....	Number	2,301	2,381	2,313	2,156	2,239	2,164
Eggs Produced.....	Million	551	567	554	7,407	7,837	7,541
Chick Hatch-Egg Type	Thous.	4,596	5,019	3,741	38,049	38,918	34,613
Chick Hatch-Broiler Type	Thous.	14,343	14,202	14,408	792,173	817,068	787,064
Poults Placed	Thous.	-	-	-	23,587	24,659	23,904

EGG PRODUCTION

Egg production in Pennsylvania during April 2006 totaled 554 million eggs, up half a percentage point from the 551 million eggs produced in April 2005. The total number of layers averaged 23.9 million during April, up slightly from last year. Production per 100 layers was 2,313 eggs during the month, an increase of 12 eggs from April 2005.

Egg-type chicks hatched during April 2006 totaled 3.74 million, down 19 percent from the 4.60 million hatched the previous April. Broiler-type chicks hatched totaled 14.4 million during April 2006, up slightly from the 14.3 million hatched during the same month last year.

United States' egg production totaled 7.54 billion during April 2006, up 2 percent from last year's total during April. The total number of layers during April averaged 348 million, up 1 percent from the number of layers during the same month last year. April egg production per 100 layers was 2164 eggs, up 8 eggs from the same month last year.

Egg-type chicks hatched in the United States during April totaled 34.6 million, down 9 percent from April 2005. Broiler-type hatch totaled 787 million, down 1 percent from last year at this time. There were 23.9 million turkey poults placed in the United States during April 2006, up 1 percent from the placements during the same month a year ago.

County estimates for 2005 can be found online!

*Check out NASS's homepage at
www.nass.usda.gov*

Click on ' QuickSTATS '

COMMERCIAL LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER, APR 2006

Specie	Unit	Pennsylvania	United States
Red Meat Prod	Million pounds	91.2	3,614.4
Cattle	1,000 Head	65.1	2,607.4
	1,000 pounds live	81,303	3,248,884
Calves	1,000 Head	12.1	47.5
	1,000 pounds live	5,218	17,990
Hogs	1,000 Head	218.5	7,955.6
	1,000 pounds live	52,957	2,167,521
Sheep & Lambs...	1,000 Head	7.3	248.5
	1,000 pounds live	691	33,813

LIVESTOCK SALUGHTER

Commercial red meat production, dressed weight basis, in Pennsylvania during April 2006 totaled 91.2 million pounds, up 2 percent from April 2005. Beef production, at 81.3 million pounds live weight, was down 1 percent from April 2005. Total head slaughtered was 65,100, down 3 percent. Live weight averaged 1,250 pounds, up 26 pounds from last year. Veal production was 5.2 million pounds live weight, down 6 percent from last year. Calf slaughter of 12,100 head was down 13 percent from last year. Average live weight increased 31 pounds to 431 pounds. Pork production was 53.0 million pounds live weight, up slightly from last year. Total head slaughtered was 218,500, up 1 percent from April 2005. Average live weight decreased 2 pounds from last year to 242 pounds. Lamb and mutton production during April 2006 was 691,000 pounds live weight, up 2 percent. The number slaughtered was 7,300, unchanged from last year. Average live weight increased 2 pounds to 95 pounds.

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